GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:195
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2016
Extension Reforms Programme
Nagar Shri Rodmal

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated a scheme to support the extension reforms programmes under the Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) scheme to appoint and train Krishak Mitras (Farmers Friends) and monitor their activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State/Union Territory-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to assist the farmers for extension reforms programme in agriculture?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
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(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 195 DUE FOR REPLY ON 29TH NOVEMBER, 2016.

(a): Yes, Madam.

(b): Government of India has formulated a scheme to support state extension programme for extension reforms, popularly known as ATMA scheme. 'Farmers Friend' (FF) is one of the components of the scheme.

'Farmer Friend' (FF) component was included in the scheme during the year 2010-11 in order to act as focal points at village level. The scheme provides for identification of one progressive farmer per every two census villages. The FF serves as a vital link between Extension Worker and Farmers at village level.

As per ATMA Guidelines, FF is provided with special opportunities for up gradation of their skills through Trainings, Study Tours and visits to State Agricultural University / other institutes, by utilizing support available under the Scheme. The duties of FF are at Annexure I. To meet the contingency expenditure which the FF incurs towards discharge of his duties, a contingency amount of Rs. 6000 per annum has been provided for under the Scheme to be shared between Centre and State Government on 50:50 basis.

17 States and one UT have identified 1,65,685 FF till now. The State/ UT-wise details of Farmer Friend is given at Annexure-II.

(c): The Ministry of Agriculture has been implementing various Centrally Sponsored and Central Sector Schemes to assist farmers. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms" (ATMA) programme has been strengthened and rejuvenated during 2010-11 and again during 2014-15 to provide support at State, District and Block levels, enhanced connectivity and mobility at

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various levels and strengthening the mechanism for information dissemination at village level through the institution of one farmer friend for every two villages. Another component of this Mass Media Scheme aims to reach out to farmers (including small and marginal farmers) through electronic and print media. The Kisan Call Centres (KCC) have also been upgraded in terms of technology, enhancement of seats and effective monitoring. KCCs also are accessed by farmers. ICT tools are being extensively used to reach out to the farmers. In order to give further fillip to ICT in agricultural extension, pico projectors and hand held devices also have been provided to the extension functionaries. Mobile apps, Short Messaging Services, Farmers portal Apps have also been launched in for the benefit of farmers.